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THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



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ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
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Chestnut-backed Chickadee, a year-round resident at the Golden Gate National Parks.

Eco-Oakland Goes to Alcatraz

Clamors of excitement could be heard as students and their families and teachers walked down the ramp and onto the ferry that would take them from San Francisco to Alcatraz Island. Three East Oakland schools—Stonemust, Whittier, and Lockwood—participated in the May 20 field trip to Alcatraz through Golden Gate Audubon's Eco-Oakland Program.

On the ride across the bay, students gazed in wonderment at Brown Pelicans flying overhead. As the boat neared the imposing island of rock jutting out of the water, the squawking of gulls grew louder and louder. Students raced off the boat and were immediately greeted by Benny Batom and biologist Christian Hellwig from the National Park Service, who patiently answered their myriad questions.

With journals and binoculars in hand, we headed up the hill to observe the nesting Western Gulls. "Why are the nests on the ground?" "I see an egg!" "Why is that gull putting his beak in the other gull's beak?" "Look, they're fighting!" These were just some of the exclamations and questions from students and family members as they watched gulls building nests, fighting over territory, mating, and feeding. Looking down the cliffs, we saw cormorants in every nook and cranny, and to our delight some nests had recently hatched chicks.

We then learned about how humans and

ECO-OAKLAND continued on page 10

Coastal Renewal at the Golden Gate National Parks

The Golden Gate National Parks' Presidio and Lands End offer some of the most visually spectacular and ecologically significant landscapes in the Bay Area. To ensure that these important parklands continue to provide refuge to wildlife, plants, and people, the National Park Service, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, and Presidio Trust are carrying out a number of exciting trail and natural area improvements. These improvements are part of Trails Forever, a park-wide initiative to establish a world-class trail system and to protect park resources, made possible by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Foundation, the California State Coastal Conservancy, other community partners, and the members of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

At both Lands End and the Presidio Bluff, the convergence of unique geologic surfaces, Mediterranean climate, and coastal location has given rise to extraordinary ecological diversity. The parks' mottled blue-green coastal bluffs are a showcase for serpentinite, the California state rock. The Presidio contains the only intact remnant serpentinite bluff habitat on the San Francisco Peninsula. These serpentine soils are nutrient poor and contain high levels of heavy metals that can be toxic to plants.

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 15, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Society Supporting Membership is \$25 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets the last Monday of every month (except August and December) at 7:30 p.m. in the chapter office in Berkeley.

The Gull is published nine times per year by the Golden Gate Audubon Society. The deadline for submissions is five weeks prior to the month of publication. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to office promptly. The post office does not forward *The Gull*.

The Gull - ISSN 0164-971X

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Design and layout: e.g. communications

New Faces at Golden Gate Audubon

We are pleased to welcome new board and staff members to Golden Gate Audubon this fall: Sarah Reed and Michael Martin.

Sarah Reed joined the Board of Directors on July 15. Sarah is currently pursuing her PhD in environmental science, policy, and management at the University of California, Berkeley. Her studies focus on the human impacts on wildlife populations in the southwestern United States, with a particular emphasis on how human activities—from agriculture to urban development to recreation—affect carnivores in Northern California's protected areas. Sarah also holds a bachelor's degree in environmental and women's/gender studies from Yale University.

Many of you may know Sarah as the coordinator of the East Bay Speaker Series this last year. Sarah has done a fabulous job of recruiting interesting speakers to address our members and of coordinating these events with the rest of our Speaker Series team. In addition, Sarah has advised the San Francisco Conservation Committee on issues relating to the impacts of dogs and cats on Bay Area wildlife. We are delighted to welcome Sarah to our board and know she will make a tremendous contribution.

Michael Martin joined our staff on July 31 as our new Volunteer and Membership Development Coordinator. With a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and a master's in history from the University of Kansas and a master's of public affairs from Indiana University, Michael brings a strong knowledge of conservation and environmental justice issues to his work with Golden Gate Audubon. He has an impressive history of developing volunteer and membership programs with a number of campus organizations, and was instrumental in building small student groups into vibrant entities working for environmental change. Michael also served as membership promotion chair for the Jayhawk Audubon Society in Lawrence, Kansas, where he helped the organization grow its membership by roughly 20 percent and was successful in diversifying the chapter's volunteer base.

Michael will be filling the shoes of former Volunteer and Membership Development Coordinator, Jacob Winiecki, who left Golden Gate Audubon in July to work with the Foundation for Sustainable Development in Uganda. We thank Jacob heartily for his work at Golden Gate Audubon and wish him the best of luck—as well as happy birding in Uganda!

by Elizabeth Murdock, Executive Director

The Gull Wins Top Honors in Newsletter Contest

The Golden Gate Audubon newsletter received a first-place award in the National Audubon Society's Biennial Newsletter Contest in the category of chapters with more than 1,500 members. Judges commended the elegant design and the diverse content of *The Gull* and praised a number of features, including the quality of the writing, commitment to addressing conservation issues, especially the treatment on page one; the informative listings of field trips, programs, and bird sightings; and the choice of chlorine-free recycled paper.

National Audubon's newsletter contest, held every two years, is very competitive. This year, a total of 77 chapters from throughout the United States entered in several categories. To learn about the contest and other award winners, go to www.audubon.org/local/index.html.

We thank Mark Briggs and Eva Guralnick at e.g. communications for their contribution in helping *The Gull* earn this award.



RESTORATION DAYS II IN SUPPORT OF EAST BAY ECOLOGY

With the end of the Least Tern breeding season at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, volunteers begin preparing the nesting grounds for the 2007 season. Work parties organized by Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge (FAWR), one of Golden Gate Audubon's conservation committees, are held the second Sunday of each month through March. Participants work from 9 a.m. until noon, then spend an hour at the refuge to enjoy lunch and the surroundings. The next restoration day is Sunday, September 10. Volunteers should bring work gloves, water, lunch, and sun protection and assemble at the refuge's main gate. The refuge is not open to the public, so this is the perfect opportunity to see this critical nesting location for the endangered California Least Tern and to observe the other birdlife, as well as to appreciate a unique panoramic view San Francisco Bay.

The FAWR committee sponsors other activities, and interested volunteers are encouraged to attend the committee meetings, held in Room 140, Building I, Alameda Point, on the third Monday of each month from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The next meeting is on September 18. For information and directions, contact committee chair Leora Feeney at leoraalameda@att.net or go to www.goldengateaudubon.org.

WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER BIRDING SURVEYS

In 2005, after several color-banded Western Snowy Plovers were spotted in the bay-side Wildlife Protection Area at Crissy Field, Golden Gate Audubon's San Francisco Conservation Committee began conducting regular surveys of the area's wildlife. From early October of 2005 to early February of 2006, volunteers observed 45 species of birds, in addition to the federally threatened Western Snowy Plover, in the beach and dunes, along the shore, and in the bay. At the same time, they recorded disturbances to foraging and roosting birds from human activities, on- and off-leash dogs, and wild-



Black-necked Stilt at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge

life such as American Crows. The project's aim is to document the sensitivity of the habitat and to develop recommendations for the National Park Service that would better protect Crissy Field's birdlife.

The monitoring continues this fall through the winter of 2007, and additional volunteers are invited to participate. The one-hour surveys are scheduled for both weekdays and weekends. While helping efforts to protect local wildlife, birders will be learning about the restored Crissy Field and the many species it supports. For more

information or to sign up for the surveys, contact Matt Zlotnick at mszlotnick@audubon.org.

LEAST TERNS CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Do you love seabirds, especially the one-bird family of birds, the Least Tern? And do you appreciate watching the biggest, roundest, most colorful seabird you see in the East Bay wetlands and open waters? If you do, you will like doing your own part in the monthly monitoring of the Least Tern Conservation Committee. You'll also learn about the conservation issues affecting birds and other wildlife in the East Bay and how Golden Gate Audubon is ensuring parkland and protecting our resources like the Golden Gate and California Least Tern. Meetings are fun and social and take place quarterly at the Golden Gate Audubon office, 2500 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley. The next meeting will be held in September. For details on date and time, contact Samantha Murray, Conservation Director, at 510.844.6151 or sam@audubon.org or goldengateaudubon.org.

Memorial Celebration for Howard L. Cogswell

On Saturday, October 14, at 10 a.m., friends, colleagues, and admirers of the late Dr. Howard L. Cogswell will gather at Cogswell Marsh at the Hayward Area Shoreline to honor the achievements of this dedicated conservationist and accomplished ornithologist, who passed away in June at age 91. After the memorial, a birdwalk will be conducted through the marsh.

Author of the respected and oft-cited *Water Birds of California*, published by the University of California Press in 1977, Cogswell was active in Golden Gate Audubon, serving on the board of directors from 1954 to 1960. He also led field trips, taught classes, and wrote for *The Gulf*. Cogswell taught at Mills College in Oakland and was professor emeritus at California State University, Hayward (now CSU East Bay).

Serving for more than a decade as a director of the East Bay Regional Park District, he took a leading role in the district's plans to preserve the East Bay shoreline. Cogswell Marsh, the first phase of the Hayward Area Shoreline's restoration, was named after him on its completion in 1980.

For questions or to RSVP, contact memorial organizers Terry Preston at mtmpreston@comcast.net or Debbie Viess at amanitarita@sbcglobal.net.



BIRDING CLASSES

Fall Birding Classes in the East Bay

Upcoming fall classes sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon will be offered through Albany Adult School (AAS). Preregistration for the classes, which fill early, starts in August. Register for classes in person or by mail at Albany Adult School, 601 San Gabriel Avenue, Albany, CA 94705. Phone: 510.559.6580. All classes are taught in the Albany High School, 655 Key Route Boulevard, Albany.



Bob Lewis

Snow Geese with Ross's Geese at Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge; Willet at Hayward Area Shoreline.

Birding Basics

Eddie Bartley

Lectures: Tuesdays, September 26 – October 24, 7 – 8 p.m.

Field Trips: Saturdays following class sessions

Learn how to identify common birds in this class for beginning birders, loosely based on *Sibley's Birding Basics* by David Allen Sibley. Fee: \$52

Eddie operates a nature tour company and is an accomplished trip leader and photographer.

Autumn Birding Around the Bay

Denise Wright

Lectures: Wednesdays, September 13 – October 18, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Field Trips: Saturdays following class sessions (four half-day trips, two longer day trips)

Fall is an exciting season for birding, with shorebirds and waterfowl returning from their summer nesting sites. Join an enthusiastic group to sharpen field identification skills through illustrated lectures and field trips. Fee: \$55

Denise is a well-known expert in birdsong and has taught field birding courses in the Bay Area for several years.

Shorebird Migration

Bob Lewis

Lectures: Wednesdays, September 13 – 27, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Field Trips: Saturdays following class sessions

The class focuses on the marvels of shorebird migration and features three evening lectures and three Saturday field trips to a variety of shorebird sites. Fee: \$45

Bob has taught a variety of AAS birding classes, including several on avian migration.

Cranes and Geese

Rusty Sealford and Bob Lewis

Lectures: Wednesday, November 15, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Field Trip: November 18 – 20

One evening lecture will be followed by a three-day field trip to Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, and Spenceville Wildlife Area. Fee: \$50

Rusty and Bob have taught birding classes, including Bay Area Birds, at AAS for many years.

Fall Birding Classes in San Francisco

Evening classes taught by Joe Morlan and endorsed by Golden Gate Audubon begin in September. Slides illustrate all lectures, and the text for all classes is *A Field Guide to Birds of North America*, fourth edition, by the National Geographic Society. *The Sibley Guide to Birds* is recommended as an adjunct text for Ornithology II and III. Participants should also bring binoculars to class. Optional field trips on weekends may be arranged.

All classes meet from 7 to 9:15 p.m. in room 307, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore. Free parking is in the school lot off Bay St. Fees are \$130 for each seven-week course (\$115 for six-week EA125). For more information, call 415.561.1860. To enroll online, go to www.evolve.com/ce.ccsf. See also Joe Morlan's website: <http://fog.ccsf.edu/~jmorlan/fall06.htm>.

Field Ornithology I

Introduction to birds and birding, combining basic field skills with the study of bird ecology, evolution, and behavior. Meets on Tuesdays.

Part A (EA101): September 12 – October 24

Part B (EA105): October 31 – December 12

Field Ornithology II

In-depth study of the identification and status of North American birds, including ducks, vultures, and hawks. Meets on Wednesdays.

Part A (EA110): September 6 – October 25

Part B (EA115): November 1 – December 20

Field Ornithology III

Continuing study of North American landbirds, including flycatchers, jays, shrikes, vireos, larks, and swallows. Meets on Thursdays.

Part A (EA120): September 7 – October 26

Part B (EA125): November 2 – December 16



SPEAKER SERIES

Talks in the Speaker Series begin at 7:30 p.m. At 7 p.m., delicious snacks are served by hospitality coordinator Susanne Shields. Speaker Series coordinator is Sarah Reed.

The Invaded Estuary: Exotic Species in San Francisco Bay

by Andrew Cohen

Friday, September 8
San Francisco

Thursday, September 21
Berkeley

The San Francisco Bay Estuary is one of the most highly invaded aquatic ecosystems in the world. Exotic organisms, as many as 250 species, now account for most of the species across many of the estuary's habitats and have dramatically altered food webs and population dynamics. The Asian Clam, for instance, which has taken over large portions of the bay, consumes plankton, an essential food source for aquatic species. The Mitten Crab, also from Asia, has spread not only throughout the bay but into the Sacramento Delta. Alien plants, including Atlantic Cordgrass and Water Hyacinth, propagate so aggressively that they choke tidal marshes and waterways.

Dr. Andrew Cohen, a marine biologist and the Director of the Biological Invasions Program at the San Francisco Estuary Institute, will discuss how these invaders have arrived, what changes they've caused, and what can be done about them. Cohen helped write California's mandatory ballast water exchange law—the first in the nation—and helped develop the world's strongest ballast water discharge standards, which may be enacted in California this year.

San Francisco: County Fair Building, San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park, Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way. Directions: www.sfbotanicalgarden.org/visiting/page2.html

Berkeley: Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin). Directions: www.northbrae.org/directions.htm

Zen and the Art of Mushroom Hunting

Lecture: Friday, November 3,
7:30 – 9 p.m.

Field Trip: Sunday, November 5,
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Join an experienced and engaging guide as you discover the wild and wonderful world of mushrooms. This workshop, taught by Debbie Viess, consists of an evening slide lecture, including hands-on material, at Live Oak Recreation Center, 1301 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, and one day in the field at a premier mushrooming location.

The fee is \$30 for GGA Supporting Members, \$40 for nonmembers. To register, contact Tara Zuardo, GGA Office Manager, at 510.843.2222.

Debbie is a Bay Area biologist, writer, and teacher who has studied and taught about mushrooms for the past 15 years.

Join Golden Gate Audubon

Have you renewed your 2006 Supporting Membership to Golden Gate Audubon? If you haven't, we encourage you to renew by visiting us at www.goldengateaudubon.org or by calling our office at 510.843.2222.

All of our activities, including field trips, Speaker Series, and environmental education programs, depend on the generosity of Supporting Members. Remember that although Golden Gate Audubon is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, we are an independent organization with our own budget and membership. Dues from our Supporting Members directly support our local programs. With your help, we can continue to be a leader in Bay Area conservation and education in 2006.

Help Protect Wildlife for Generations

With population growth and development pressures increasing in the Bay Area, wildlife will come under new threats in the coming decades. You can help make the future safe for Bay Area birds by including Golden Gate Audubon in your estate planning.

Bequests and other planned gifts can make a tremendous difference for conservation. Bequests we have received in past years have helped us protect vital habitat for California Least Terns and even set aside new open spaces, such as Point Pinole's Whittell Marsh. Planned gifts also help us strengthen our programs. By making a gift of any size directly to Golden Gate Audubon in your will, you can help protect Bay Area wildlife and habitats for years to come.

In addition, thanks to our partnership

with National Audubon, you can support Golden Gate Audubon in the future with a variety of other legacy gifts, including annuities and trusts.

If you would like to find out how making a bequest or other legacy gift will affect you and your family, we can work with you and your attorney to select the most appropriate plan for you, provide you with the legal language you'll need, and answer questions you might have about how best to help Golden Gate Audubon. If you decide to include Golden Gate Audubon in your estate planning, please let us know, so that we can offer any assistance that you might need.

Thank you to all members who have already included Golden Gate Audubon in your estate planning!



FIELD TRIPS

SUSAN GROVES, COORDINATOR

\$ Entrance fee

 Biking trip

Detailed trip descriptions are located on our website at www.goldengateaudubon.org. If you need further information or have difficulty reaching a trip leader, please contact Susan Groves at 510.654.5954 or groves.susan@gmail.com.

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

Saturdays, September 2, October 7,
10 a.m. – noon

Angie Geiger and Nancy DeStefanis, SF Nature Education; Darin Dawson, SF Botanical Garden Docent. 415.387.9160, www.sfnature.org

Meet at kiosk at front gate of garden, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. Families welcome. Children must be accompanied by adult.

Cosponsored with San Francisco Botanical Garden and San Francisco Nature Education.

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

Sundays, September 3, October 1,
8 – 10:30 a.m.

Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall, 650.349.3780

Meet at front gate of garden, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. The garden has several micro-habitats that attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds.

Eastshore State Park

Thursday, September 7, 9 a.m.

Bob Lewis, 510.845.5001, Rlewis0727@aol.com

Meet in the parking lot at the west end of Buchanan St. in Albany. We will check out returning shorebirds.

From I-80 take Buchanan St. exit and drive west. The street ends at the parking lot.

Coastal San Francisco

Sunday, September 10, 8 a.m.

Dan Murphy, 415.564.0074, murphsf@comcast.net

Meet in the parking lot between South and Middle Lakes (Chain of Lakes) near the 41st Ave. and Lincoln Way entrance to Golden Gate Park. We will bird in Golden Gate Park, at Lake Merced, and in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in search of migrating flycatchers, warblers, sparrows, and other vagrants. Bring lunch and be prepared for cold weather near the coast.

Lincoln Park Bird Walk

San Francisco

Sunday, September 10, 8 a.m. – 11 a.m.

David Armstrong, 415.305.7681, darmstrong99@yahoo.com

Meet on Merrie Way (parking lot up the hill from the Cliff House) for this walking tour of some of San Francisco's finest fall birding locations. We will cover about 3 miles of mostly flat terrain (with a few short climbs/stairs) in search of migrants and vagrants. Wear good walking shoes and carry plenty of water. Trip limited to 15 people. Contact leader after September 4 to reserve a place. Email preferred.

For public transportation, use Muni line #38 or #18.



Alan Hopkins

Western Sandpiper, one of the many shorebird species starting to arrive in the Bay Area.

Aquatic Park

San Francisco

Sunday, September 10, 9:30 a.m.

Carol Kiser, SF Maritime National Historical Park Ranger, 415.561.7100 or 561.7104

Meet at foot of Hyde Street Pier, at Hyde and Jefferson, for this 2-hour beginners' walk to discover birds in the urban environment. Trip is wheelchair accessible.

Pt. Reyes National Seashore

Marin County

Saturday, September 16, 8 a.m.

Rusty Scalf, 510.666.9936, rfscalf@sbcglobal.net

Meet at Five Brooks Pond. We'll also visit Olema Marsh, the seashore visitor's center, and Drake's Estero. Email leader for details.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

Sunday, September 17, 8 a.m.

Charles Hibbard, Lewis Ellingham, Brian Fitch

Meet at the front of Randall Museum, Museum Way off Roosevelt. We'll enjoy stunning views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights, checking the east canyon woodland and the north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitor the hilltop scrub and south cliff. For more

Carpool to Field Trips

It's easy to carpool on GGA field trips. To join the mail list group, just go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/GGACarPool>. Once you join, you can send and receive messages about carpools. Give your message a title, "Offer Ride" or "Need Ride," plus location and date of the field trip. In the body of the message, note your approximate location (El Cerrito, South Berkeley, etc.). Others who read your message will contact you to arrange a carpool. Give it a try! If you have a problem accessing or using the email list group, contact Bob Lewis at Rlewis0727@aol.com. Need a carpool but don't have a computer? Call Claire at 510.528.1155.

information, contact Margaret Goodale, 415.554.9500, ext. 16, mgoodale@randallmuseum.org.

Mori Point

Field Trip

Sunday, September 17, 8 a.m. – noon
Andrew Kleinhesselink, 415.561.3023,
andy.kleinhesselink@hotmail.com

Meet at the gate on Bradford Way, across from Moose Lodge. Mori Point, a new addition to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, is only 150 acres, but the mix of habitats makes it a favorite of local birders. We'll have good chances to see migrating warblers, early arriving waterfowl, raptors, and seabirds. Besides avifauna, the area is also home to the threatened California Red-legged Frog. Mori Point is managed in large part by volunteer support and the Site Stewardship Program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, which is currently planning the restoration of its native habitat. Andrew Kleinhesselink, an intern with the Site Stewardship Program, looks forward to sharing his enthusiasm for this spot with birders who don't usually venture south of Lake Merced. Bring wind-resistant clothing.

From Hwy 1, go west at the Westport St. exit, then turn left on Bradford Way. Continue a short distance past the houses; gate is on the right.

SF Birds at Merrie Way

Sunday, September 24, 8 a.m.
Harry Fuller, 415.344.2363,
anzatowhee@yahoo.com

For this monthly trip, meet at Merrie Way, the unpaved lot at the west end of Pt. Lobos above the Cliff House at Land's End. We'll look for resident and migrant birds, including shorebirds on the rocks and migrating landbirds in the trees. The first Golden-crowned Sparrows should have arrived. Follow the birds and seasons at one of SF's most beautiful spots.

Meeker Slough

Field Trip

Sunday, September 24, noon – 4 p.m.
Bob Lewis, 510.845.5001,
Rlewis0727@aol.com

The Watershed Project will have an open

Bicycle Trips

Kathy and Blair Jarrett

510.547.1233 (call for cell number, no calls after 7 p.m.), kathy.jarrett@yahoo.com
Bicycle helmet required. Bring lunch and liquids, binoculars, bike lock, and sunscreen. Dress in layers. Rain cancels. All levels of birders and bicyclists welcome.

BART schedules: www.transitbART.org **Train info:** <http://bicycleriders.org> **SF Bay Trail:** <http://www.sf-baytrail.org> **Santa Clara County bicycle info:** www.sccba.org **Eastshore State Park:** www.eastshorepark.org

Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Field Trip

Saturday, September 9

Meet at 9:15 a.m. at trailhead or at 8:30 a.m. at Sarita Clara/Great America Capital Corridor Train Station. We will ride to trailhead and make a circuit of the unpaved trail around marsh to visitor center and also ride on streets to return to trailhead. Approximate distance 15 miles. Trip concludes about 2 p.m. for return on 2:52 p.m. train, arriving at Oakland Coliseum station at 3:39 p.m.

Car: Take I-880 south toward San Jose, then Hwy 237 west. Go 2.2 miles and take North First St. west. Turn right on North First, becoming Taylor in about 1 mile. In one block, turn right on Old St., then left on Elizabeth, right on Hope, and left on Mill Ct. to the trailhead parking for Don Edwards NWR. **Transit:** Take BART to Oakland Coliseum Station and connect to Westbound Capital Corridor train leaving at 4:43 a.m. Buy ticket from machine on platform. Arrive Santa Clara/Great America at 8:29 a.m. Bring a bike lock to anchor your bike on train. BART leaves Richmond at 6:35 a.m. and MacArthur at 6:54 a.m. and arrives at 7:11 a.m. Train from SF arrives at 7:07. Emeryville station is a full-service station for those who want to ride to the station; train leaves at 7:20 a.m. Arrive well in advance to purchase ticket and get on platform. Senior fares at discount of 15 percent are available for those 62 and over.

East Shore State Park and Aquatic Park

Saturday, September 16, 8 a.m.

Meet at southernmost pond of Aquatic Park, at Bay and Potter, Berkeley. We will bird most of Eastshore State Park from Emeryville to Richmond. Food and drink may be purchased en route.

Car: From San Pablo Ave. south of Ashby Ave, turn west toward bay on 67th St. then right on Bay St. just past train tracks. Go straight to end, past Potter St., to a small parking lot on right. Bicycle back to first pond. Watch out for busy traffic going toward freeway from Bay and Potter. **Bike:** Ashby and North Berkeley BART stations are recommended. Access to Aquatic Park from Addison St./Bancroft Way, Bay St. or bicycle-pedestrian bridge from San Francisco Bay Trail south of University Ave.

Folsom to Sacramento on the American River Trail

Challenge Course

Saturday, October 7, 8:30 a.m.

The 33-mile, all-day trip, beginning in Folsom, is a test run of a trip planned for spring of 2007. Recent bicycling experience is necessary; you must have stamina to ride entire distance. There will be frequent stops for birding opportunities. Participation is limited. Call or email to reserve a space and receive details.

house at its facility near Meeker Slough. Bob Lewis will lead participants on a walk along the slough and Bay Trail to see what birds are coming to the restoration project, and members of the Watershed Project will explain their remediation work. See the Golden Gate Audubon website, www.goldengateaudubon.org, for additional details.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Field Trip

**Wednesday, September 27,
9:30 a.m. – noon**

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,
hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,
510.528.2093, ruth_tobey@earthlink.net;
Travis Hails, 510.451.1207 (no calls after

FIELD TRIPS continued on page 8

New Book Recounts Dramatic History of Golden Gate National Recreation Area

It's likely very few of the thousands of people who enjoy the magnificent Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) know its origin or its dramatic history. While the geography is eons old, the struggle to protect and preserve 80,000 acres of coastline and adjacent lands—stretching from Tomales Bay south through San Francisco and the Presidio and deep into San Mateo County—is a saga of the past few decades.

Fortunately, Golden Gate Audubon member Amy Meyer, a prime mover behind the creation of the GGNRA, has written a fascinating account of how the park came into being. *New Guardians for the Golden Gate: How America Got a Great National Park* (University of California Press; hardcover, \$29.95) is a panoramic sweep of Bay Area political and environmental history from the 1960s to 2004. It is also a how-to guide to effective grassroots activism that travels from Meyer's kitchen table in San Francisco's Richmond District to the halls of Congress in Washington, DC.

Meyer's story is rich with anecdotes and personal observations from her front seat on the roller-coaster ride to assemble properties and create the largest urban area national park in the U.S. Her transition

from wife/mother/artist to environmental activist began in 1970 when she led a fight to stop construction of a huge federal archives building at East Fort Miley, a few blocks from her home. When she learned of a plan afoot in Washington to create a West Coast national park encompassing the headlands of the Golden Gate, she realized she was into a much larger game.

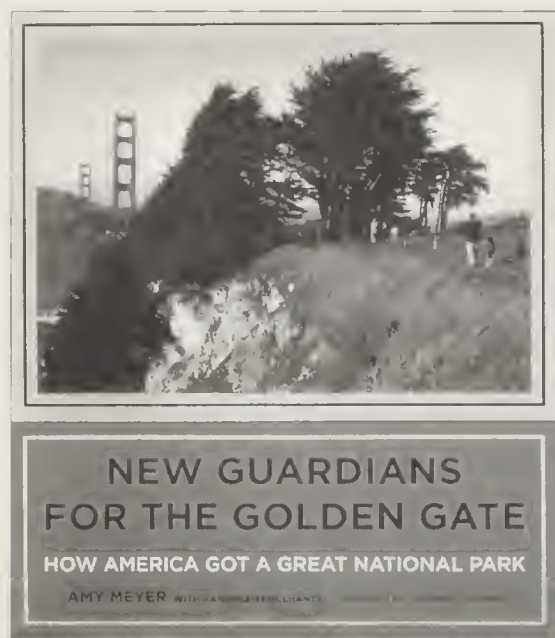
New Guardians recounts the exciting era in American environmental history during the 1960s and '70s when the GGNRA was created. At a time when development threatened to pave over western Marin County,

President Kennedy signed legislation creating the Point Reyes National Seashore in 1962, and President Nixon signed the National Environmental Policy Act in 1969 and the Endangered Species Act in 1973. And in October 1972, he signed a bill creating the GGNRA.

New Guardians is a story with numerous heroes, including the Sierra Club's Edgar Wayburn and national park superintendents Bill Whalen and Brian O'Neill. Looming above all is Congressman Phillip Burton, the indefatigable, powerhouse politician who led the fight in Congress to create the park and then to enlarge its boundaries, as well as to vastly expand the national park system between 1974 and 1980.

"I've told this story so people will not take the [GGNRA] for granted," Meyer writes. "... I've described what the windshield view cannot reveal to a visitor: how much of this land was affectionately protected piece by piece and then how the diverse pieces were united by the legislation... I've also told this story in the hope that our experiences will inspire others and that they will take ideas from our efforts to organize successful park campaigns in other places."

by Marjorie Blackwell,
President, Golden Gate Audubon



FIELD TRIPS from page 7

9 p.m.), travishails@yahoo.com

Meet beside the spherical cage, just up Bellevue from the Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue Streets.

Take 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins; walk into park on Perkins, or park in free lot at boathouse, 568 Bellevue. Cage is at far end of lot from boathouse

Lake Merritt

Golden Gate

Saturday, September 30, 9 a.m.

Travis Hails, 510.451.1207 (no calls after 9 p.m.), travishails@yahoo.com

Meet at the spherical cage near the Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue.

Designed for novice and intermediate birders, this trip will provide an introduction to birding as well as an opportunity to study birds that are more difficult to identify. First half focuses on waterbirds. Second half is in parklands bordering lake where we expect to see smaller birds. Vagrant species occur frequently at Lake Merritt. Route is handicapped accessible. For directions, see September 27 trip.

Hawk Hill

Marin County

Saturday, September 30,

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Stefanie Arthur, 415.587.9282

Meet at platform with wingspan diagrams. Hawk Hill, in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, is the premier hawk-watch location in the West. Enjoy the various species of hawks that migrate through the Bay Area with the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory Day Leader. Bring lunch and liquids, sunscreen, and hat. Layered clothing advisable. Parking limited; carpool if possible.

From south, cross Golden Gate Bridge and take second exit, Alexander Ave. Get in left lane following signs to 101 San Francisco. Turn left at stop sign and cross under freeway. Turn right onto Conzelman Rd. and drive 1.8 mi. to Hawk Hill. Park and walk up hill past the locked gate. From north, take last Sausalito exit to GGNRA. Turn left at stop sign. Go up hill onto Conzelman Rd. Stay on Conzelman for 1.8 mi.



LOONS TO DUCKS

A May 2 seawatch from Pigeon Pt., SM, ID'd a Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*) in close offshore waters (RT). At Año Nuevo SR starting June 5, an adult female Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*) spent 3 days on the island just offshore (KL, PM). Little Blue Herons invaded SCL for over a week beginning June 9, including Salt Pond #16 in Alviso (BB; mob); Almaden L. Park (MM, mob); Coyote Ranch Marsh (MM, mob); and Coleman Rd. Bridge in San Jose (BRe; mob). Perhaps 1 or more individuals also accounted for the SM sightings on June 24 in Menlo Park (RT) and Jul. 10 in San Mateo, SM (ADM).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

In early May, the Common Black Hawk (*Buteo gallus anthracinus*) was rediscovered at Laguna Santa Rosa, SON (reported by JMo; DSh). A wayward Broad-winged Hawk soared over Presidio Hills, SF on May 14 (RF). June 17–20 a Crested Caracara (*Caracara plancus*) was photographed at Mendoza (B) Ranch, PRNS, MRN (JDe; KH, GF, PT). This is presumably the same individual that has wandered the coast from SON to MTY for over a year. An unseasonal Prairie Falcon was spied from the Canada de Pala Trail in Joseph Grant CP, SCL, on Jul. 13 (BB).

An American Golden-Plover joined Black-bellied Plovers at the Sonoma Baylands on May 8 (RSt). An adult-plumaged Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*) was picked out of the Western Sandpiper flock at New Chicago Marsh in Alviso, SCL, on Jul. 16 (MBr; RK, PKe, MM, OJ, DW) and refound on the 20th (SR). Other noteworthy sandpipers in late July included a Solitary Sandpiper in Gilroy, SCL (FV, BRe); Baird's Sandpiper at Hayward RS, ALA (BRi); and Pectoral Sandpiper in S. SF, SM (DP). Red Phalaropes numbered 167 at New Chicago Marsh (SCL) on May 3 (HH). Between May 6 and June 13, scattered Black Terns were reported at Hayward RS (RSe); New Chicago Marsh (MM; BRe, MD, MRo, DM); and Arrowhead Marsh, ALA (BD; BM).



Little Blue Heron

Unseasonal Ancient Murrelets were observed May 15–17 at Cordell Banks, MRN (AH) and Pigeon Pt., SM (RT). June 17, a Horned Puffin was found dead on the beach by Fitzgerald Marine Reserve staff in Moss Beach, SM (SD; Reported by RT).

DOVES TO THRASHERS

Three Long-eared Owls and 10 Black Swifts were noted along Monte Bello Ridge, SCL, on June 3 (SR). A male Costa's Hummingbird visited the chaparral below the south gate of MDSP, CC, on June 11 (ADM). An Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*) selected a song post near the Mace Blvd Bridge, SOL, on June 4 (RM; JS, TE, FO). A Bell's Vireo took up song in riparian willows near Coyote Cr. Golf Course, SCL, on June 20 (MM). Red-eyed Vireos transited through in early June at Mt Davidson, SF (PS); Moss Beach., SM (RT); and outer PRNS, MRN (RSt). A Cactus Wren at

Orchard Nursery in Lafayette, CC, was well described on May 11 (MW).

Between May 19 and June 19 Townsend's Solitaires were reported from the Santa Cruz Mountains at Monte Bello OSP (GH), Wright Station Rd. (BRe) and Coal Cr. OSP (GH). A Solitaire also wandered out to the Lighthouse at PRNS, MRN on June 13 (KH). The same day, a Gray Catbird was just up the road at Nunes (A) Ranch (BSt). Sage Thrashers were reported near Doral Beach, PRNS, on June 1 (RoH) and at Monte Bello Ridge, SCL, on the 3rd (SR).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

A singing male Prothonotary Warbler turned up in San Gregorio, SM, on June 17 (RT). Other warbler sightings included Northern Parula (3), Black-and-white Warbler (3), American Redstart (2), Ovenbird (1), and Hooded Warbler (4). A Black-chinned Sparrow spent the last week of May on a rocky, chaparral covered slope above Hidden Villa, SCL (GH; mob). Nine Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and 3 Indigo Buntings were reported throughout the region in June.

A Dickcissel explored the cattle pens at Nunes Ranch, PRNS, on the 13th (KH). A Mill Valley (MRN) birder found a Yellow-headed Blackbird on May 2 (MU). Back at the Nunes Ranch, a *Contrastus* (*Quiscalus quiscula*) was discovered June 19 (RSt). Finally, solo Evening Grosbeaks were located at Loma Prieta, SCL and Russian Ridge, SM, May 29–Jun. 1 (KO, RT).

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers, "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions. Special thanks to Brent Plater for assistance in compiling data.

Abbreviations for Observers: ADM, Al DeMartini, AH, Alan Hopkins, AK, Alan Krakauer, BB, Bill Bousman, BD, Bob Dunn, BF, Brian Fitch, BM, Bruce Mast, BRe, Bob Reiling, BRi, Bob Richmond, DC, Daryl Coidren, DM, Dean Manley, DP, Donald Pendelton, DQ, Dave Quady, DSh, Doug Shaw, DSu, David Suddjian, DW, Dave Weber; ES, Emilie Strauss, FO, Frances Oliver, FV, Frank Vanslager, GF, Gary Fellers, GH, Garth Harwood, GS, Gary Strachan, HB, Herb Brandt, HF, Harry Fuller, HH, Hugh Harvey, HK, Harrison Karr, JB, Jane Bosshard, JC, Judi Cooper, JDa, Jeff Davis, JDe, Joe Devine, JL, Jim Lomax, JMa, Jim Makesnee, JMo, Joe Morlan, JS, John Sterling, KB, Ken Burton, KH, Keith Hansen, KL, Kirstin Linquist, KO, Kris Olson, LH, Lisa Hug, LS, Linda Stinchfield, MBr, Matt Brady, MBu, Michael Butler, MD, Matthew Dodder, ME, Mark Eaton, MiB, Michelle Brodie, MM, Michael Mammosen, MMC, Mike McCosky, MPO, Mike Rogers, MRu, Maggie Rufo, MU, Myra Ulvang, MW, Mark Westlund, OJ, Oscar Johnson, PKe, Pat Kenny, Pki, Patrick King, PM, Pat Morris, PR, Phila Rogers, PS, Paul Saraceni, PT, Peter Tapis, RF, Robbie Fischer, RiH, Rick Hallway, RK, Roland Kenner, RM, Roger Muskat, RoH, Roger Harshaw, RR, Rhio Reigh, RSc, Rusty Scalf, RSt, Rich Stallcup, RT, Ron Thorn, SD, Steve Durkin, SR, Steve Pottenborn, TC, Terry Colborn, TE, Todd Easterla.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda, BBA, Breeding Bird Atlas, CC, Contra Costa, CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station, CP, County Park, Cr., Creek, Cyn., Canyon, DENWR, Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge, EEC, Environmental Education Center; GGP, Golden Gate Park, L, Lake, MDSP, Mount Diablo State Park, MRN, Marin M., Mount N., North, NAP, Napa, NSMWA, Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area, NWR, National Wildlife Refuge, OSP, Open Space Preserve, PRNS, Pt Reyes National Seashore Pt., Point, Rd., Road, Res., Reservoir, RP, Regional Park, RS, Regional Shoreline, S, South, SB, State Beach, SCL, Santa Clara, SF, San Francisco, SFBBO, SF Bay Bird Observatory, SM, San Mateo, SOL, Solano, SON, Sonoma, SP, State Park, SR, State Reserve, WPCP, Water Pollution Control Plant.

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Amiko Mayen

Eco-Oakland student at Alcatraz

insistence of their children. All of them said it was well worth it. Many families hope to return to see the rest of the chicks hatch

and learn how to fend for themselves. One mother later reported that her daughter insisted on staying after her soccer game to clean up leftover garbage, explaining that she needed to do it to help protect the bay.

This family trip was such a success that the National Park Service and GGA's Eco-Oakland Program are planning to bring more than 500 family members to Alcatraz over the following year.

by **Diana Vélez,**
Teacher, Stonehurst Elementary

Thanks go to our generous funders—The San Francisco Foundation, The Clorox Company Foundation, Starbucks Grants for Giving, Nature Restoration Trust (NF&WF and PG&E), California Coastal Commission, Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program, and San Francisco Estuary Project—and to Aquarium of the Bay for waiving admission fees

Donations

orous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

Blair & Alfredo Contreras, Santa Clara Valley (Ass), Maggie Seely

Alameda Wildlife Refuge), Robert & Pam Howard, (Creekcats Environmental Fund), Miles R. & Mel (Ass), Starbucks Make Your Mark Volunteer Program,

Richard Bertero (*The San Francisco Foundation*), Tomas Latham, Steven & Renee Margolin (*Latin haefar (Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge)*),

Scott Benson, Liz & Richard Bordow, Barbara C. Cantrell, Barbara Champion, Jim Clarke, Ronald Linda L. Eby, Mary & Tom Foote, Ben Gerwick, Hamlin, Susan Hampton, Janet Harrison, Harlan Hong, William Hudson, H. Nona Hungate, Diane in & Jerry Bowling, Dwight L. Johnson, Larry M. Foundation, Sandra La Framboise, Barry S. Levin, Lucy Lou (*Bank of America—Quail Restore-A-McKinley*), Robert Oswald, Donald A. Reinberg, yard Rowe, Marc Rumminger, Michael Sanchez (rt Campaign—Eco-Oakland Program), Debra Jane Spriggs, Stephen R. Steinke, Ursula R.

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Dr. Ira Davidoff: James M. Clayton and Clayton & Associates, David Hayne
Miles T. McKey: Miles R. & Mel McKey (The Miles T. McKey Memorial Fund)
Bobbie Sneed: Margaret Golway

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The San Francisco Foundation: Eco-Oakland Program
Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program: Eco-Oakland Program
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Fourth Annual Quail Restore-A-Thon

For the fourth consecutive year, Golden Gate Audubon is sponsoring a Quail Restore-A-Thon dedicated to enhancing California Quail habitat at the Presidio in San Francisco. Join us on Saturday, November 18, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., when we will remove invasives and plant native vegetation that supports San Francisco's official city bird. Last year, energetic volunteers uprooted such invasives as iceplant and replaced them with hundreds of native shrubs. This November, we aim to attract an even larger team of enthusiastic volunteers and continue to transform derelict fragmented areas into valuable habitat for quail and other wildlife.

Volunteers provide their time to this effort, but the Save the Quail Campaign also needs money to help guarantee its success. If you cannot participate in the

field, you can assist us in raising funds. By sponsoring a volunteer on the Golden Gate Audubon volunteer team for four hours at \$15 per hour, you will be contributing \$60 to the campaign. If you are able to join us, you can sponsor yourself and also ask friends and family to fund your four hours of work. All contributions are fully tax-deductible.

California Quail, also the official state bird, once thrived in the city, but due to habitat loss and other impacts, the population has declined precipitously. Golden Gate Audubon is dedicated to restoring healthy quail numbers through our monthly workdays as well as these annual Restore-A-Thons held in partnership with the Presidio Trust and National Park Service.

If you come on November 18, not only will you be helping the quail, but you're guaranteed to have fun in the company of



(left) Quail cap designed by Alan Hopkins
(above) California Quail

other dedicated volunteers. After the event you can linger to bird or hike in the Presidio. Last year, birders saw quail in Quail Commons, one of the habitats that volunteers have worked diligently to restore.

Save the Quail Restore-A-Thon

Saturday, November 18, 2006 • 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- I would like to join a work party.
- I will sponsor myself at \$ _____ per hour. Please send me a pledge form so that I can also seek pledges from friends and family.
- I will sponsor the Golden Gate Audubon volunteer team or _____ at \$ _____ per hour or give a total donation of \$ _____. (Suggested minimum pledge rate: \$15 per hour.)
- I can't participate in the Restore-A-Thon but want to help! Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Sponsors contributing \$30 or more receive a California Quail cap.
Please RSVP by November 10 to help us prepare for the event.

Make checks payable to **Golden Gate Audubon Society** and mail to:

Golden Gate Audubon Society
2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G
Berkeley, CA 94702

Or go to www.goldengateaudubon.org
to sign up and make a donation.

However, many species, including eight of the parks' rare plants, have evolved to survive in these soils, some growing exclusively in serpentine.

Given the special qualities of these coastal areas, it's no coincidence that birds, tree frogs, Grey Fox, and other wildlife all seek refuge here. As park visitors stroll down the California Coastal Trail, they may hear the trill call of a Bushtit, catch a glimpse of the iridescent hood of an Anna's Hummingbird, or marvel at a Red-tailed Hawk hovering in search of prey.

One of the most pressing threats to these native coastal ecosystems is the invasion of non-native plants. Restoration plans call for the removal of high-priority invasive species, including Cape Ivy (*Delairea odorata*), and select non-native trees from natural areas. The removal of non-native trees, as called for in the Presidio Vegetation Management Plan, will provide for the restoration of wetland and coastal scrub habitats as well as the opening of scenic views from the Coastal Trail. Several special status bird species that forage or nest in coastal scrub and wetland seep habitats stand to benefit from the

restoration, including the California Yellow Warbler, Wrentit, Bewick's Wren, and White-crowned Sparrow. Removal of non-native trees and invasive plants will begin at the end of songbird nesting season under the watchful eye of wildlife monitors. Point Reyes Bird Observatory is also monitoring these coastal areas to observe bird use before, during, and after the restoration.

The Monterey Cypress and Monterey Pine that grace the historic forests at Lands End have long offered a welcome refuge to both people and wildlife, but are now showing their age. Many of the forest stands have heavily exceeded a healthy capacity of 200 trees per acre, reaching nearly 700 trees per acre. Overgrown forests are vulnerable to fire, erosion, and disease. They also provide diminishing habitat value to wildlife, as tree limbs fall and are unable to regenerate. Thinning overgrown stands will increase the health of the forest. A limited number of trees will be pruned, and select trees that pose immediate safety hazards or show signs of disease will be removed. Effort will be made to maintain snags that may serve as wildlife habitat.

In recent years, the California Coastal

Trail through Lands End and the Presidio has shown signs of wear. Park visitors will soon notice a smoother trail surface, new directional signs, and enhanced views. Improvements to the Coastal Trail at Lands End begin in September. Work on the Presidio's Coastal Trail is scheduled for the summer of 2007 following the removal of army-era landfills in the vicinity that bury sensitive ecological habitat.

Lands End and the Presidio Bluffs will remain open while work is taking place, and there will be only limited trail closures. Please visit the park to experience the natural wonder of these unique coastal areas and see the improvements taking shape.

by Erin Heimbinder,
Project Coordinator, Trails Forever

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Volunteers actively care for the Golden Gate National Parks' trails and ecosystems. To get involved in trail and natural area restoration, contact Denise Shea at 415.561.3013 or dshea@parksconservancy. For further information about the Trails Forever projects, contact Erin Heimbinder at 415.425.5672 or cheimbinder@parksconservancy.org.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The Gull is the newsletter of the Golden Gate Audubon Society. Benefits of being a Supporting Member of Golden Gate Audubon include a subscription to *The Gull*, a 10 percent discount at the GGA Nature Store, and the satisfaction of supporting local conservation efforts. National Audubon Society members are encouraged to join Golden Gate Audubon directly by going to www.goldengateaudubon.org or calling 510.843.2222.

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